

WLBT/WJDX Radio Broadcast

Live Report from Oxford, Mississippi:
University of Mississippi Campus Riots in response to Meredith registration

September 30, 1962

MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF ARCHIVES AND HISTORY
Post Office Box 571
Jackson., Mississippi 39205

AU/MP 1980.01.103

Participant(s): Allen, Chuck
Bingham, Cliff
Cox, Forrest

Title: Live Report from Oxford, Mississippi: University of Mississippi
Campus Riots in response to Meredith registration, September
30, 1962

ARCHIVISTS' NOTE:

AU/MP1980.01.103 contains a 5 minute duplicate from AU/MP1980.01.102. The duplicate is basically ALL of Cliff Bingham's report in AU/MP1980.01.102

0:00-0:03 [Dead noise]

0:03-0:25

CHUCK ALLEN: Forrest Cox and Don Elliot have confirmed that James Meredith is in the Lyceum building at the University of Mississippi. Forrest Cox and Don Elliot just reported by shortwave communications, that Meredith came out the back of the Lyceum building and came, and came around to the front and then went into the building again.

0:26 – 0:40

The authorities say that after he has been registered, after he has been registered, he will leave the campus. A news pool is being formed and all news will come [weird mix glitch for a beat] from one authoritative source.

0:41 – 0:47

And that's the story for the moment, here at the University of Mississippi campus.

0:47 – 0:48

[Dead noise]

0:49 – 0:50

TECHNICIAN ??: Okay, thank you.

0:51 – 1:03

[Feedback, unintelligible – Sounds of crowd at Oxford]

01:04 – 01:17

FORREST COX: This is Forrest Cox from Oxford, Mississippi. Ah, we are right at the entrance of the University campus...[bg atmos sounds] I understand there is a mob headed in this direction. There are quite (?) of nation guards that have been stationed right here at the entrance.

01:17 – 01:36

I can hear one of the men talking right now. He said, he also got stomped to death. Apparently, he came from downtown and they have been alerted..... We don't, I understand, he said it was just like a bunch of wild men. We don't know where they're from or anything but we'll give you more reports just as soon as we get it.

We return you now to WJDX.

01:37 – 01:39

[Unintelligible radio chat]

01:40 – 01:40

Huh?

01:41 – 01:41 [Unintelligible radio chat with audible regular bg atmos of trucks at campus]

01:42 – 02: 06
COX: This is Forrest Cox reporting once again from Oxford, Mississippi. There has been a number of national guardsmen moved into the campus and this is the first time that we've seen any evidence of regular army moving in. There have been several large trucks pass by our vantage point. In fact, I can't see the end, oh, here comes the end of the line down University Avenue right now. I would say approximately 20 to 25 to 30 trucks of regular army units are moving in right now.

02:07 – 02:26 We'll keep you posted on further details. Take it back, I can't see the end of the convoy, there is a tree in the way. I have to look around the tree but as, I can see just as, well, in fact, I can see the trucks just as far as I can see down University Avenue. They're moving in right now; regular army units onto the campus of Ole Miss.

Forrest Cox reporting from Oxford University.

02:24 – 02:33 [Atmos sounds of trucks]

02:34 – 02:35
TECHNICIAN: [inaudible] That it, Forrest?

02:36 – 02:36
COX: Beg your pardon?

02:36 – 02:37
TECHNICIAN: That's it?

02:37 – 02:37
COX: That's it.

02:37 – 02:38
TECHNICIAN: Okay, thanks.

02:38 – 02:39
COX: Not too much.

02:41 -02:42 Ah, Andy?

02:44 – 02: 45
TECHNICIAN: Hello Forrest. Just a second...

02:45 – 03:18 [ATMOS of trucks with a short cough at 02:54]

03:18 – 03:22 [Dead noise]

03:22 – 03:46
COX: James Meredith is attending his first class at Ole Miss, here in Oxford, Mississippi, right now. Very few of the news media or the TV cameramen or radio reporters were able to accompany him to his first class. Under specific instructions from the United States marshal, only one of each of the media would be able to attend class with Meredith. In other words, I assume there were only two or three reporters with him at the time.

03:47 – 03:55 This is very strict stipulation and it's going to have to be followed or all newsmen will be thrown from the campus. This is Forrest Cox from Oxford, Mississippi.

03:55 – 03:58 [Dead noise]

03:59 – 04:17 [long audio drone throughout dialogue]
We're reporting from Oxford, Mississippi. The latest developments seems to be, ah, Meredith by the way is still attending class as near as we know. The general attitude of the students round right now, well we have done what we wanna do. We did it last night. Now we're going to settle down, that is, momentarily at least.

04:18 – 04:29 [long audio drone throughout dialogue]
In other developments, ah, we were on the square in Oxford this morning. There were a number of students up there early this morning and, as we reported early, they looked to be getting in a frame of mind for a demonstration there.

04:29 – 04:53 And apparently when the regular army moved in, that was all they needed. They took off. The regular army came in, arrested a number of them and I understand they've declared marshal law all over Oxford. The army has blocked off the square. They have about 500 men standing guard down there. In fact, no-one but the army is on the square. We'll bring you further developments as we get them. This is Forrest Cox in Oxford, Mississippi.

04:53 – 04:56 [Dead noise]

04:56 -04:57 [inaudible / long glitch radio noise]

04:57 – 04:58
CHUCK ALLEN (?): Are you rolling tape?

04:59 – 05: Roger. [bad feedback right after]

05:00 – 05:03 Alright. We'll take it in 10 seconds. We'll take it in 10 seconds.

05:04 – 05:05
TECHNICIAN: Okay [inaudible]

05:05 – 05:14 [Dead noise]

05:14 – 05:15 [Truck bg ATMOS with long droning noise still on tape]

*ARCHIVISTS' NOTE:
BELOW ARE REPEATED RADIO CLIPS AS SEEN IN AU/MP1980.01.102. TOTALING 4
MINUTES*

05:15 – 05:24
CHUCK ALLEN (?): Back in Oxford Mississippi, at the WJDX/WLBT Remote central, here is
WLBT/WJDX reporter/photographer Cliff Bingham.

05:24 – 05:52
CLIFF BINGHAM: Chuck, I've just returned form the Lyceum building. The situation,
believe it or not, has deteriorated. It's worse now than it's been. The
tensions are much higher. As I was in the Lyceum building, four members
of the Board of Trustees, appeared on the scene. I asked them what they
were doing here, doing up here, they just said, that they couldn't say, they
were just up here to see what was going on. They were asked to come up.

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what was going on. They were asked to come up.

05:53 – 06:06 General Walker came in in the custody of five US Marshals. He was
ushered to the back room where the prisoners have been kept all the
morning and we have been unable to find out whether he is under arrest.
Guthman says he does not know.

06:07 – 06:26 The monumental foul-up that has gone on between the Justice Department
and the army is something to behold. The Justice, the army has restricted
the movements of the highway patrol in such a manner that they cannot
even help with what's going on.

06:26 – 06:46 We tried to get to the airport to send off the film in a highway patrol car,
they turned us around, I have been since that time with Guthman trying
find out why because other reporters have sent their film out. He says, he
doesn't understand it but the word has gone out to allow the reporters free

access anywhere they wanna go

- 06:46 – 07:00 But I told him, that he would have to tell the army that, and the Colonel in charge says he doesn't understand why it is and for two hours I stood up there. They said they would get me a jeep and get me personally escorted to the airport. I have yet to be escorted.
- 07:01 – 07:12 The he says that the highway patrol was of no assistance last night. He would have to leave the story of that to the reporters who were on hand. The highway patrol has a different story.
- 07:12 – 07:33 They say that they were pushing the students back and getting them out of the way, when all of a sudden McShane, the head marshal, ordered the firing of the first gas pellets. He says that the highway patrol was not helping and that they got a dose of the gas because the...the crowd was getting unruly.
- 07:34 – 07:57 Now as I say, I just left the campus. I'm sure that someone has already reported about Meredith. I asked, just before I left, I asked Guthman what Meredith's situation was. He says, he is attending classes, he will continue to attend classes and I says, Well, how long do you expect to keep the marshals up here guarding him? They said, We don't know. Indefinitely.
- 07:58 – 08:13 And that, it seems to be about what's going on up there now. We don't know what's taking place. As I stood in the hall as they took, marsa-, General Walker in, ten marshals were brought in rather hurriedly and....
- 08:15 – 08:41 they were ordered to load their gas guns with these gas pellets about a foot long. They were all ordered and they're standing in the hall guarding this door now, as though, the.... As I stood at the front door, 56 prisoners were brought in [background voices] by a company of soldiers, about a hundred soldiers brought a group of prisoners, 56. I stood at the door and counted them as they walked by.
- 08:41 – 09:05 Some of the news photographers had, ah, movie lights and they turned them on and they were knocked down by bayonets, in the hall. One of the marshals was shovin', was shoving the press around, and just to show, it looked like, to show his authority, he went over and hit one of the prisoners up against the head who was standing with his hands against the wall. And I personally saw that happen.
- 09:06 – 09:30 Nobody seems to know why he did it and there was, the prisoner was not even looking at him. He was leaning against the wall, forward with his hands against it as they do prisoners. The prisoners, I went...Guthman took me down into the basement where they kept the prisoners myself and a New York Herald-Tribune reporter, we went with Guthman down in there and it

was a basement store room.

09:31 – 09:47 In this store room they had over a hundred prisoners. We talked to them, they allowed us to talk to them as we wanted and I asked them if they had had anything to eat. They were put in there last night. They said they hadn't had anything to eat since yesterday at noon and they hadn't even been given any water.

09:48 – 10:00 This seemed to upset Guthman considerably, and he gave orders that they were to be fed as soon as it was reasonably possible. The army told him, no arrangements has been made to feed these prisoners. We have to wait for orders.

10:01 – 10:13 There is a big snafu going on between the Justice department and the army. Nobody seems to know what they are doing and everybody is working against everybody else. This is Cliff Bingham in Oxford, Mississippi.

END OF REPEAT PORTION

10:13 – 10:25 [Dead noise]

10:26 – 10:46
COX: [Audio a little more crackle & rattle than usual]
We're speaking from Oxford, Mississippi. Right at the moment we are on the square. As you know, the entire city of Mars-, Oxford, Mississippi is under marshal law. The United States army has troops surrounding the entire square. I understand they had to come in this morning for a number of, ah, possibly they were students, with some outsiders mixed in almost started a riot.

10:47 – 11:02 In fact, I believe they did start one. There weren't too many students. Apparently, they weren't too hard to handle. The United States Army moved in, arrested them and right now they're cleaning up the square, the broken bottles, big [sounds like bats??] lying all over the square. No other damage though most of the stores are closed incidentally.

11:02 – 11:14 At the moment, we're sitting in front of the Post Office building. As you know, Major General Edwin Walker was arrested this morning, by federal agents and at the moment, he is in the post office building. We are waiting for him to come out.

11:14 – 11:31 I understand they have set his bond at 100,000 dollars. There have been four charges lodged against him and they are all serious charges. We'll keep you up to date on the Walker situation as more news develops. Meanwhile, this is Forrest Cox reporting from Oxford, Mississippi.

11:31 – 11:42	[Dead noise]
11:43 – 11:53 ALLEN:	Hemingway Stadium is the scene of a great deal of activity this Monday afternoon, the first day of October, but it's not concerned with preparation for the next football game of the University of Mississippi.
11:54 – 12:35	<p>[trucks and bg sound]</p> <p>The second armored unit, the second infantry units, that are have been assigned from Fort Benning here at the University of Mississippi campus are setting up [sounds like- Bibbo wacks]?? The area back of the scoreboard, back of the stadium itself, back of the press box side is taken up with tents with installations for the soldiers that have been assigned here. In walking into the area, Bill Brady (?) of the Canadian Broadcasting Company and myself, we're allowed into the area. We were given an escort by a Captain at the gate to the S-1 Tent.</p>
12:36 – 12:51	We met a Captain there. We asked him, some two or three general questions. 'No comment. No comment'. Then (?), I assume, were you born in Oxford, Mississippi. He answer was curt and concise. 'I cannot answer that.'
12:51– 13:11	As we left, a helicopter landed. Lots of activity at Hemingway Stadium here at the University of Mississippi campus today. All of a marshal, military nature. The troops are preparing to stay evidently as long as the, the, ah, federal government thinks it's necessary. How long that will be will be anyone's guess.
13:11 – 13:42	I went form the stadium directly to the Lyceum building, to the press room, and was given the information that Edward Guthman, the Justice Department official that is in charge of the Meredith operation here said there would be a press conference at three o'clock and at that time the total number of arrests, at the moment, would be given, and the progress of Meredith as a student at Ole Miss would also be elaborated upon.
13:45 – 13:58	Cliff Bingham, Forrest Cox and Cecil Surman and Don Elliot, will attend that press conference and report on film and live to you. This is Chuck Allen at the University of Mississippi, WJDX-WLBT remote central.
13:58 – 14:00	[Dead noise]
14:00 – 14:10	It's starting to get dark again on the campus of the University of Mississippi here in Oxford and here with the reports, of things at the moment is Forrest Cox.
14:11 – 14:29	

COX: Well as the day gradually grows into darkness, things just seem to getting just quieter and quieter. They tightened down this morning of course, when the ah, national guard moved in. They gradually got tighter as the regular army moved in, more and more regular army troops have been moving in and they are taking over the campus at Oxford with very, very tight security regulations.

14:30 – 15:00 Frankly, I don't see where there is any chance at all for anything to happen tonight or in fact, anyone couldn't even possibly get on the campus for anything to happen. I would say that there are approximately four to 5,000 regular army troops here right now and they are stationed over the entire campus. They are being checked very closely. Their cars are searched. When they come in they have to show passes and I just don't see how anything could happen under these circumstances.

This is Forrest Cox reporting from Oxford, Mississippi.

15:00 – 15:06
ALLEN: Also at the press conference this afternoon was WLBT-WJDX reporter/photographer, Cliff Bingham.

15:08 – 15:19
BINGHAM: Chuck, it seems that the army has this thing pretty well tied down. We're not going to be able to do anything in the way of pictures for some time to come it looks like.....

15:21 – 15:42 There is still a great deal of tension up here. The situation is still serious. I can see that there's been no change as far as the seriousness of this situation. There are marshals passing now. There is one, two, three carloads with eight marshals in each one.

15:44 – 16:01 We understand that they are going uptown for security reasons up there. We don't know exactly what that is but that's about the 10th or 12th car that's passed by full of marshals. That's about it from here. This is Cliff Bingham reporting from Oxford.

END OF RECORDING